

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 13248 01 OF 02 182314Z
ACTION EUR-12

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R 181610Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4295
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMEMBASSY BONN
DIA WASHDC
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
SHAPEUSNR
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
USDOCOSOUTH
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 13248

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF
SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: ALESSANDRO PERTINI: HIS RECORD

1. ALESSANDRO PERTINI, OR SANDRO IN THE COMMON USAGE, WAS BORN OF MIDDLE-CLASS PARENTS ON SEPTEMBER 25, 1896 IN STELLA SAN GIOVANNI, NEAR GENOA. HE IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY CLOSE TO HIS MOTHER, MARIA, WHO RAISED PERTINI AND HIS THREE BROTHERS AND SISTERS FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF THEIR FATHER.

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PAGE 02 ROME 13248 01 OF 02 182314Z

2. DURING WORLD WAR I PERTINI ATTAINED THE RANK OF LIEUTENANT IN A MACHINE GUN DETACHMENT. THOUGH APPARENTLY NOT COMMITTED TO THE WAR AND EVEN REFERRED TO AS A PACIFIST BY SOME COMMENTATORS, HE ACCEPTED HIS MILITARY DUTY AND PERFORMED IT WELL. AFTER THE WAR, PERTINI DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AS A STUDENT, WINNING A LAW DEGREE WITH HONORS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF GENOA IN 1921

AND IN 1922 A DEGREE IN SOCIAL SCIENCES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE.

3. IN 1918 PERTINI JOINED THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND SOON BECAME SECRETARY TO A PROMINENT PARTY LEADER, FILIPPO TURATI. FROM THE MOMENT OF THE FASCIST SEIZURE OF POWER, PERTINI BECAME AN ACTIVE OPPONENT OF THE GOVERNMENT. SHORTLY AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF THE FASCIST LAWS IN JANUARY 1925, PERTINI WAS DETAINED IN SAVONA FOR DISTRIBUTING PAMPHLETS ENTITLED, "UNDER THE BARBARIAN FASCIST DOMINATION." FOLLOWING TRIAL, HE WAS SENTENCED TO EIGHT MONTHS IN JAIL. HIS RESPONSE WAS THAT HE WAS WILLING TO DIE FOR HIS POLITICAL FAITH.

4. AFTER HIS RELEASE IN LATE 1925, PERTINI WENT TO MILAN AND LIVED WITH CARLO ROSSELLI WHO WAS THEN ORGANIZING A CLANDESTINE EXPATRIATE ORGANIZATION. ON DECEMBER 12, PERTINI AND TURATI LEFT ITALY IN A MOTORBOAT AND LANDED IN CORSICA.

5. ALONG WITH SEVERAL OTHER POLITICALLY-ACTIVE ITALIANS OF THE TIME, PERTINI TOOK UP RESIDENCE IN PARIS. HE SUPPORTED HIMSELF THERE BY WASHING TAXICABS AT NIGHT. IN 1927 HE WENT TO NICE SO THAT HE COULD PARTICIPATE MORE ACTIVELY IN THE ANTI-FASCIST STRUGGLE IN ITALY. THERE, UNDER THE NAME JACQUES GAUVIN, HE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 13248 01 OF 02 182314Z

WORKED AS A LABORER ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. HE LIQUIDATED SOME FAMILY HOLDINGS TO FINANCE A RADIO TRANSMITTER WHICH HE ERECTED IN EZE, ON THE FRENCH RIVIERA, TO BROADCAST ANTI-FASCIST SLOGANS INTO ITALY. THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES DISCOVERED THE TRANSMITTER BUT SENTENCED PERTINI TO ONLY ONE MONTH IN JAIL. DURING THIS TIME THE ITALIAN CONSULAR AUTHORITIES IN FRANCE COOPERATED WITH THE ITALIAN POLITICAL POLICE IN TRYING TO TRACE PERTINI'S MOVEMENTS.

6. IN EARLY 1929 PERTINI RETURNED CLANDESTINELY TO ITALY BUT ON APRIL 14, 1929 WAS RECOGNIZED IN PISA AND ARRESTED. PERTINI WAS SENTENCED ON NOVEMBER 30 TO 10 YEARS AND NINE MONTHS IN PRISON PLUS 3 YEARS OF CONFINEMENT IN ISLAND DETENTION CENTERS. THE FASCIST AUTHORITIES MOVED HIM FROM PRISON TO PRISON DURING THE PERIOD. IN 1931 HE MET THE FAMOUS COMMUNIST LEADER, ANTONIO GRAMSCI, AND LATER REMARKED THAT GRAMSCI WAS THE MOST INTELLIGENT MAN HE HAD EVER MET. IN FEBRUARY 1933, UPON LEARNING THAT HIS MOTHER HAD WRITTEN TO MUSSOLINI SEEKING CLEMENCY FOR HER THEN-ILL SON, PERTINI WROTE TO THE COURT THAT HIS

MOTHER'S PLEA HAD PROFOUNDLY HUMILIATED HIM.

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PAGE 01 ROME 13248 02 OF 02 182326Z
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AMCONSUL FLORENCE
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USDOCOSOUTH
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 13248

IN THE EARLY 1940S, ON THE ISLAND OF VENTOTENE, HE MET
TERRACINI, RICCARDO BAUER, SCOCCIMARRO, SECCHIA, LONGO,
JACOMETTI, ALTIERO SPINELLI, ANTONIO FRANCOVICH,
AND CAVILLA RAVERA, ALL LATER POLITICAL FRIENDS.

7. ALTHOUGH AUGUST 1940 WOULD HAVE MARKED THE END
OF HIS SENTENCE, THE AUTHORITIES JUDGED HIM "PARTICULARLY
DANGEROUS" AND EXTENDED HIS SENTENCE FOR ANOTHER FIVE
YEARS. HE SPENT 14 YEARS IN CONTINUOUS DETENTION.

8. ON JULY 25, 1943, UPON THE FALL OF MUSSOLINI,
PERTINI WAS LIBERATED, HE REFUSED TO LEAVE VENTOTENE,
HOWEVER, UNTIL HE WAS CERTAIN THAT NO OTHER PRISONERS
REMAINED. THAT SUMMER HE RESUMED HIS POLITICAL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 13248 02 OF 02 182326Z

ACTIVITY IN ROME. PERTINI, ALLIED WITH SARAGAT AND NENNI AND CALLING THEMSELVES THE FIRST SOCIALIST NUCLEUS, FORMED AN INTERPARTY MILITARY COMMITTEE ALONG WITH THE COMMUNIST LUIGI LONGO AND ACTION PARTY HEAD, RICCARDO BAUER. FIGHTING ALONG WITH THE PARTISANS ON THE BARRICADES AT ROME'S PORTA SAN PAOLO AGAINST THE GERMAN OCCUPATION FORCE, PERTINI DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF. THE PARTISAN MOVEMENT LATER AWARDED HIM ITS GOLD MEDAL FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN THAT EPISODE.

9. ONE MONTH LATER, HOWEVER, HE WAS AGAIN ARRESTED AND JAILED. ALONG WITH SARAGAT, THE GERMANS PLACED HIM ON DEATH ROW IN ROME'S REGINA COELI JAIL. THERE HE BECAME FAMOUS AMONG THE INMATES FOR HIS KINDLY AND DIGNIFIED ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS FELLOW PRISONERS. WHEN INTERROGATED ABOUT NENNI'S LOCATION, HE REFUSED TO SPEAK EVEN UPON THE THREAT OF A FIRING SQUAD. HE ESCAPED THREE MONTHS LATER ON JANUARY 14, 1944, ALONG WITH SARAGAT AND FOUR OTHERS. IN MAY AFTER THE LIBERATION OF ROME, PERTINI WENT TO MILAN TO HEAD THE COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION. HE PARTICIPATED LATER THAT YEAR IN THE LIBERATION OF FLORENCE, SHORTLY BEFORE THE END OF THE WAR ONE OF HIS BROTHERS WAS EXECUTED BY THE NAZIS AT FLOSSENBURG CONCENTRATION CAMP.

10. IN 1945 PERTINI SERVED BRIEFLY AND ON A TRANSITIONAL BASIS AS SOCIALIST PARTY SECRETARY. IN 1945 TO 1946 AND AGAIN FROM 1950 TO 1952 HE WAS EDITOR OF THE PARTY'S PAPER, AVANTI. IN 1947 HE WAS ELECTED TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, WHICH DRAFTED THE POSTWAR ITALIAN CONSTITUTION. IN 1948, UPON THE BIRTH

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 13248 02 OF 02 182326Z

OF THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT, PERTINI BECAME A SENATOR BY RIGHT. IN 1953 HE WAS ELECTED TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF IT UNTIL HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT. ON JUNE 5, 1968 HE WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, THE THIRD-RANKING POSITION IN THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC. HE STEPPED DOWN FROM THIS POSITION AFTER THE 1976 ELECTION WHEN HE WAS REPLACED BY PIETRO INGRAO, A COMMUNIST, WHILE MAINTAINING HIS SEAT IN THE CHAMBER.

11. HE IS A AVID PIPE COLLECTOR AND SMOKER, HE IS THE AUTHOR OF ONE BOOK, "SEI CONDANNE, DUE EVASIONI" ("SIX SENTENCES, TWO ESCAPES") PUBLISHED BY MONDADORI.

12. CARLA VOLTOLINA, THE WIFE OF SANDRO PERTINI, WAS BORN JANUARY 14, 1921 IN TURIN. FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, DURING WHICH SHE REACHED THE RANK OF COLONEL IN THE PARTISAN CORPS, DOING LIAISON WORK BETWEEN COMMAND AND OPERATIONAL GROUPS, SHE WORKED AS THE PARLIAMENTARY EDITOR ON LAVORO NUOVO, A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER OF GENOA. WHEN PERTINI ASSUMED THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CHAMBER SHE DROPPED HER WORK AS A PARLIAMENTARY JOURNALIST AND, AT THE AGE OF 51, RESUMED HER STUDIES. SHE TOOK A DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY, DOING HER THESIS ON OLD PEOPLES' HOMES. SHE NOW WORKS AT THE ROME POLICLINICO DE GEMELLI HOSPITAL, ASSISTING DRUG ADDICTS. GARDNER

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